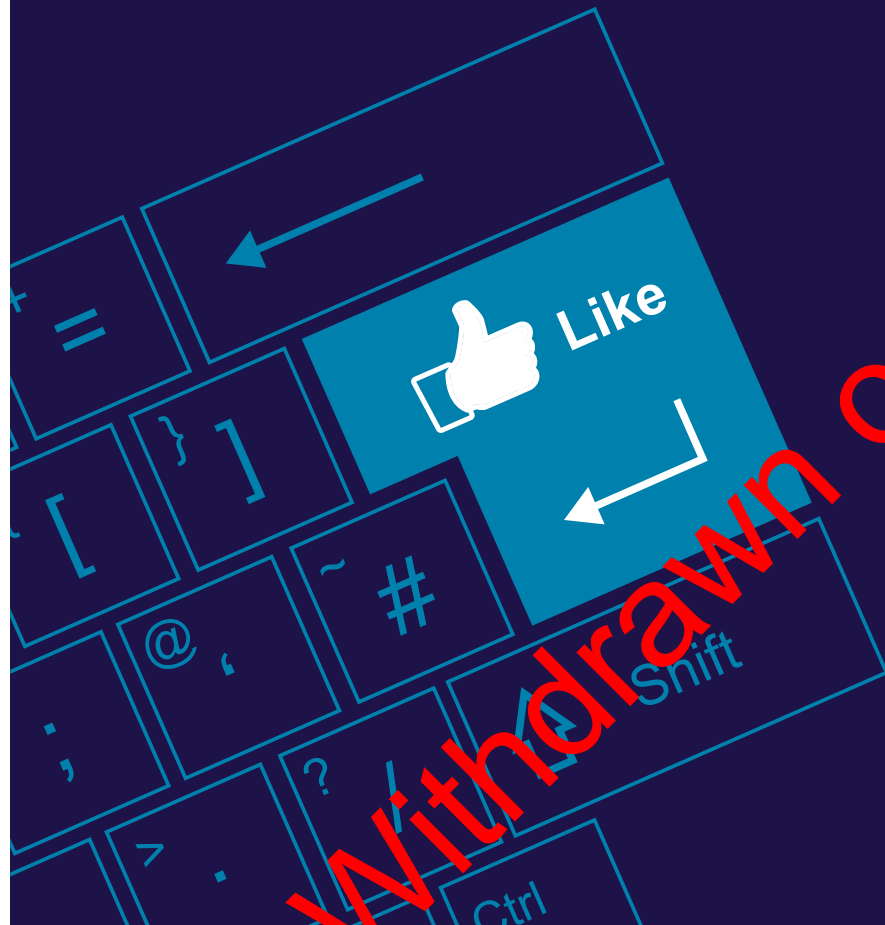


How to increase your online sales with Social Commerce



What is Social Commerce?

Social commerce involves using social media networks to encourage or make e-commerce transactions.

Users post online content that supports social interaction and assists online buying and selling.

With more time spent on social media than ever before, the majority of retailers and brands are looking at how to turn their online activity into sales.



Social Commerce Tools: Depop

Depop is an app that can be described as an eBay/Instagram hybrid, allowing users to shop directly from their favourite blogger, brand or friends profile.

Users can sell their products just by uploading a photo, as well as see what their share, buy and like. Can see what their friends share, buy and like. The interface is very similar to Instagram, allowing the user to search for a profile, like images, and comment underneath the post or private message should they want to negotiate for the item.

Depop >>



Social Commerce Tools: LiketoKnow.it and Wearisma

Liketoknow.it and Wearisma are online shopping tools that allow users to shop from their favourite Instagrammers.

After signing up to one or both of these services via their websites, the user is encouraged to like a photo on Instagram with a unique Liketoknow.it or Wearisma link. You will then receive an email with full information on the products featured in the Instagram post, with a link to buy each item.

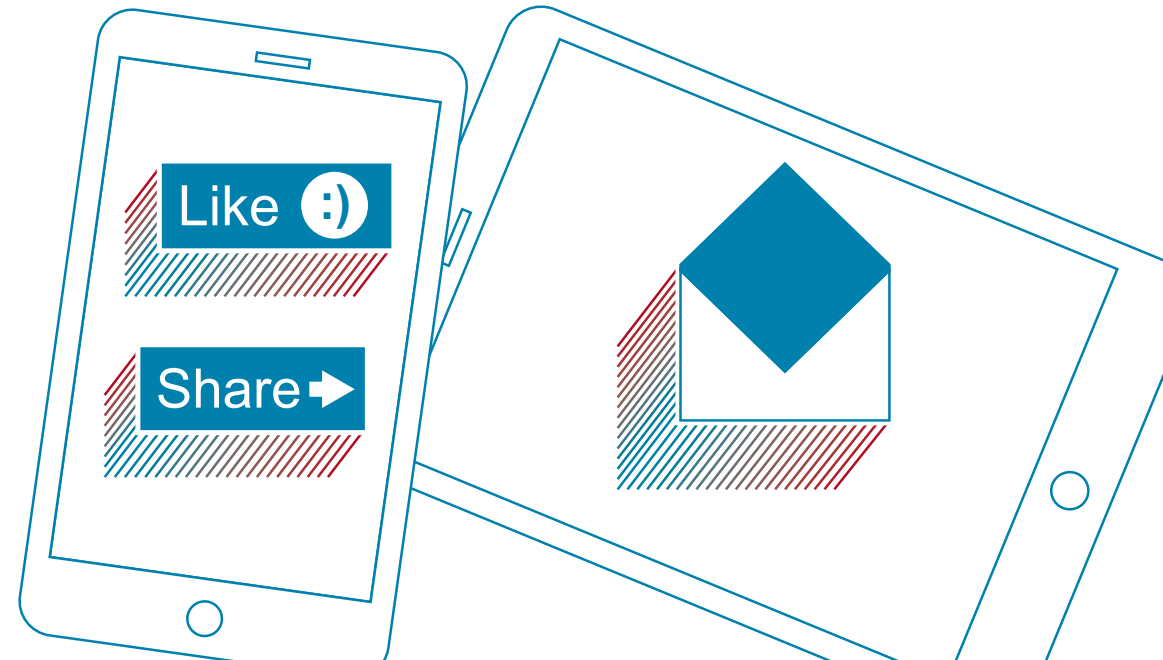
Comments

@supafan_1234

Where did you get your top?
Loving it! :)

@blogger_1234

Thanks @supafan_1234.
Click the liketoknow.it link for full details.



Social Commerce - Trends

The biggest trend is that a brand's message does not have to come from the brand itself.

There is now a new rise of influencer marketing whereby regular consumers who are active on social media can create awareness/sales for brands by validating their products or services.

Influencer marketing creates an alternative to digital advertising, such as Facebook or Instagram promoted posts.

Brands can connect with customers in a more authentic way when the message isn't coming directly from the brand.

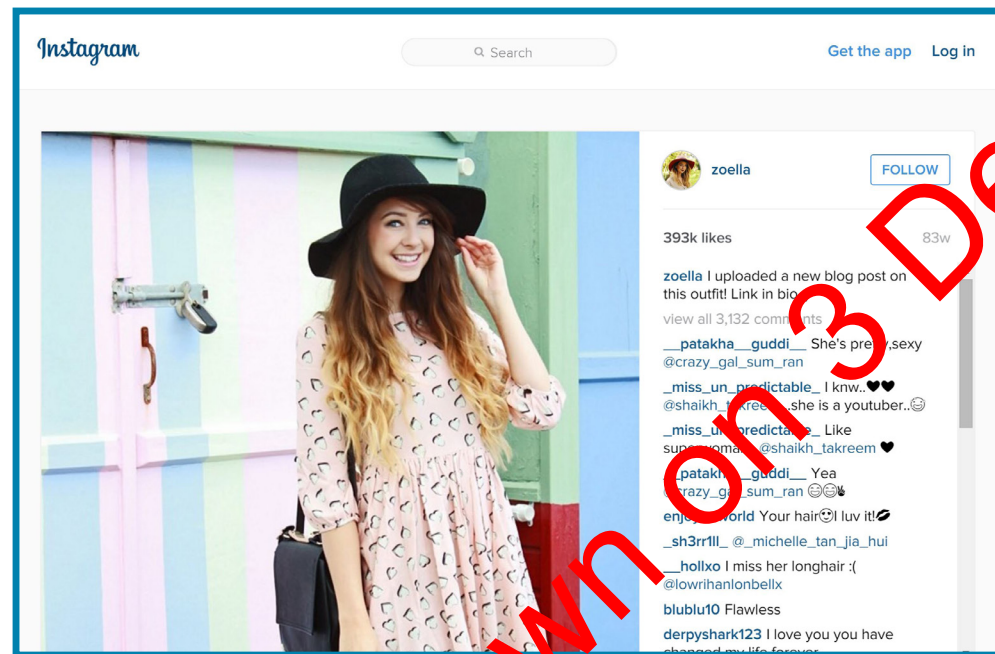
Trending Now

- 1 SAG Awards: Eight best beauty moments
- 2 Spring/Summer Couture
- 3 Mal
- 4 Rosi
- 5 Critics' choice awards: six best beauty moments
- 6 Golden globe awards

Comments

"Comments"

Influencer Marketing - Instagram



Zoella is one of the UK's most popular bloggers, with 7.2 million followers on Instagram alone.

Due to the attention Zoella commands from her global fanbase, many UK brands have increased their online sales through having their products mentioned by a blogger. In this example, Zoella is using the description box to promote a link to her blog, where you can find information on where to purchase the items in the picture.

Influencer Marketing - YouTube



Rather than using their own channels, which can come across as corporate and unimaginative, brands are now using influencer marketing to engage online customers. This includes collaborating with bloggers to promote products in a creative way.

Popular UK Blogger Lily Melrose partnered with Topshop to share items from the A/W range on her channel.

In exchange for gift vouchers, Lily bought a selection of items, shared why she bought them and included trackable links to each product in the description bar below the video.

Influencer Marketing - Twitter



Larger brands such as Burberry also engage with social media influencers, including Jim Chapman, a popular blogger with over 1.6 million followers on Twitter alone.

Jim regularly attends Burberry's shows and actively promotes the brand by wearing items of their clothing.

Benefits of working with social media influencers

- ☐ *Leverage their creativity*
- ☐ *Access their audience*
- ☐ *Connect with consumers in an engaging, authentic way*

The Future

The line between social networks and e-marketplaces will blur.

Major social media platforms will allow users to purchase directly - single click journey.

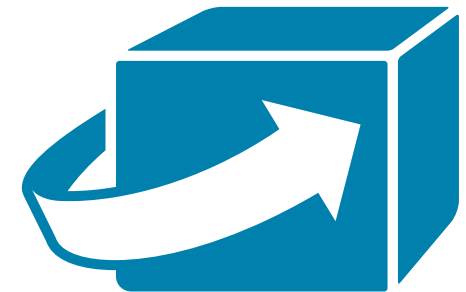
Social networks will become the middleman between their users and retail products. Some major social media platforms have already announced that they will start to recommend products, take orders, process payments, send orders directly to the retailers warehouse, etc.

Social networks will continue to be huge players in modern marketing and the backbone of consumer engagement.

Social media platforms will provide access to overseas customers, without limitations such as language and cultural barriers.



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The Future is now

Buying through social media options now include:

Buy button on Facebook

Buy It Pins on Pinterest

Shop Now on Instagram

Purchases on Google (buy direct from mobile ads)

These make the customer journey much quicker and easier as they don't have to leave the platform.



Buy Now

Withdrawn on 3 December 2020

Tips on how to get started

- 1. Identify the social media networks your customers use (how about conducting a survey via email?)*
- 2. Overlay this with sales data (e.g. what social media networks do your most profitable customers use?)*
- 3. Create social media experiences that are shoppable*
- 4. See how your audience is engaging and enable it further.*

Your customers are already documenting their brand experience with you, whether its posting an 'outfit of the day' on Instagram, Snapchatting their shopping trip or unboxing new shoes on Facebook.

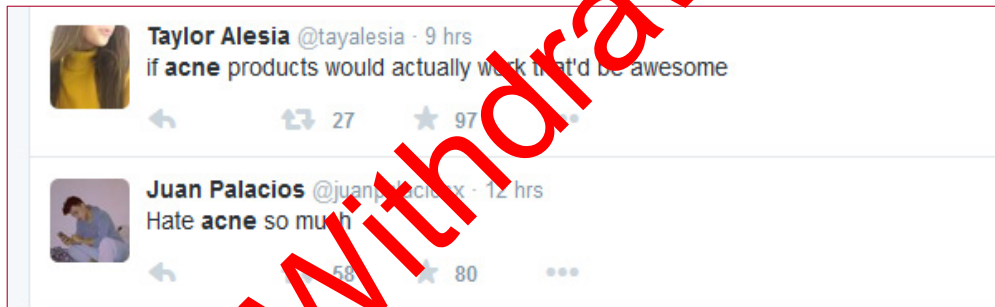


Tips on how to get started

5. *Try Social Listening: Search Keywords/Hashtags – be part of that daily conversation*

6. *Change the way that you interact on social media*

A recently launched teenage skincare brand began just by simply searching the keyword **'acne'** on Twitter and found thousands of potential customers!



Find your brand voice - this retailer chooses to be fun, informal & personable - like their audience

Referencing an influencer



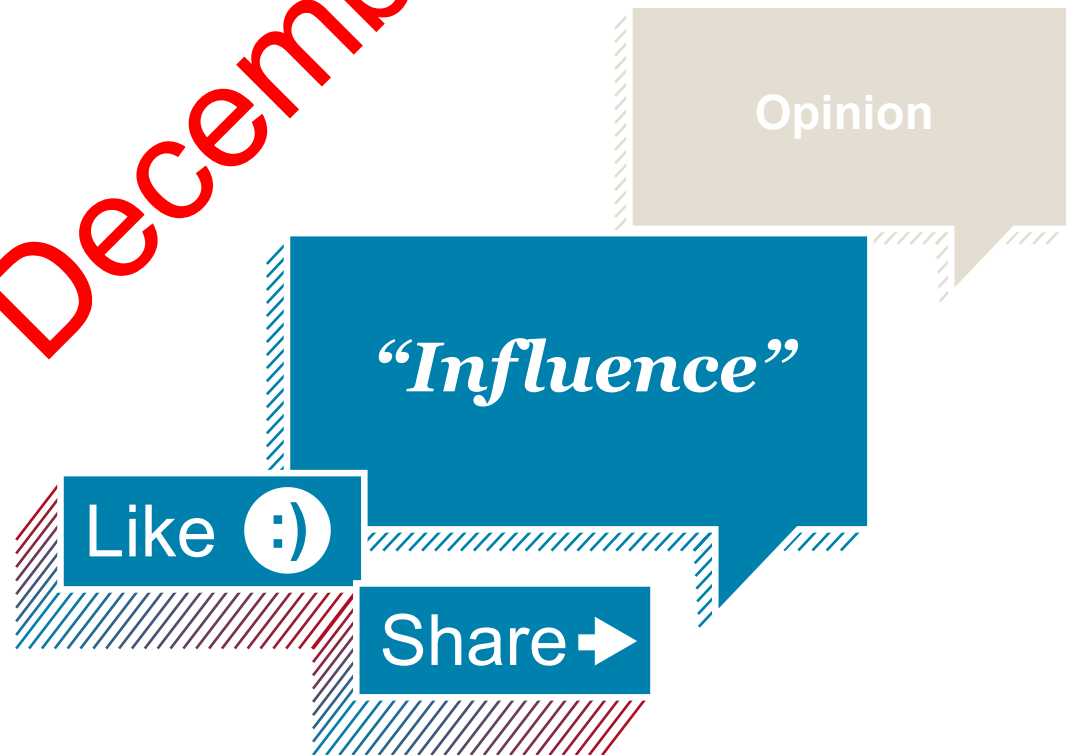
Image of item worn by a customer rather than professional shot

Direct link to buy the product

Tips on how to get started

7. Find the bloggers that you want to engage with and reach out to them via social media or email (bloggers will include contact details on their websites/social media profiles). Note that some of the more popular bloggers are usually represented by an agency.

8. Before engaging with a blogger, consider whether they will resonate with your customers. If you're not sure, ask them!



Tips on how to get started

9. *Test out an influencer marketing campaign. Companies such as Fanbytes help brands to engage their desired audience through social media channels, using an in-house technology that measures social influence.*
10. *Get your customers blogging – they are naturally your biggest advocates. Encourage them to produce a blog or video content, speaking about your brand.*

Sway

Prestige

Reputation

Impact

Tips on how to get started

11. Consider making a blogger your brand ambassador – if they have already mentioned your brand it makes sense to work with them and establish a relationship just as you would with a celebrity endorsement. Some bloggers are represented by agencies, some prefer to be contacted directly, so consider the best way to engage and create a package that benefits you both.



12. Become a brand blogger – how about producing a blog or video content yourself? Is there someone at your organisation who writes well/is engaging on camera and knows how to speak fluently about your products?



Comparing Channels

Pinterest

Introduced buyable pins allowing retailers to add a blue 'buy it now' button to pins, payment taken through Apple Pay or Credit Card. Only available to the US. 93% of users research products through Pinterest and a further 87% have completed a purchase inside of Pinterest.

Instagram

Added direct-response functionality in early 2015, allowing businesses to add a call to action such as buy it now, download now, etc. Limitation: Instagram ads are currently only available to larger brands, although plans to offer to smaller brands soon. Studies show engagement on Instagram is 58X higher than Facebook.

YouTube

Since May 2015 YouTube have rolled out ads in TrueView pre-roll videos (showcases products/services relating to the video being watched). Product review videos have increased by 50% since 2014 and revenue per impression has tripled compared to 2014.

Twitter

Twitter currently offers a 'buy button' for businesses who wish to sell via the platform, however, Twitter recently announced that they will be shifting efforts to targeted product advertising instead, a model that has worked well for the platform and appears more naturally in user's timelines. Businesses are able to create objective-based campaigns, with free analytics tools to help track, scale and optimise their Twitter advertising.

Facebook

The leader in social commerce integration. Introduced social selling in 2010. Facebook have generated over £6bn in mobile ads alone in the last year. They have also launched dedicated shopping feeds and immersive ads. Facebook is also still the most popular app, accounts for 50% of all social referrals and 64% of total social revenue. Has the most powerful targeting of any social network.

Accelerating your global growth via online channels

Clever use of social media/social commerce can be key in helping you to establish a presence overseas and gain new international customers.

Today, 97% of UK designers are on Instagram, 87% on Facebook & 86% on Twitter, reaching millions across the world.

In markets like China, social media has a huge influence on buying decisions, so can be a good channel when looking at overseas opportunities.



CHINA - overview of online retail

China has 302 million online shoppers and they are by far the world's most active online purchasers – Econsultancy, 2015

1 in 7 Chinese consumers turns to the internet for a purchase every day and more than 60% shop weekly. Three times higher than the global average, according to PwC.

By 2020, McKinsey expect China's online retail market to be as large as today's markets in US, Japan, the UK, Germany and France combined.

Why Chinese online consumers buy British

The UK is known for quality, innovation and heritage

Sound product quality

Lower price (compared to domestic websites and offline stores)

Brand preference

“A small market share in China can still represent as many, if not more, than Australia's entire online shopper base” - Azoya, 2014

CHINA - an overview of social commerce

Nearly all foreign social media platforms are inaccessible (Facebook, Twitter, Whatsapp, etc.)

WeChat has the features of Facebook, Whatsapp, Instagram and more - an ideal marketing platform.

Social media imposes a greater influence over Chinese shoppers buying decisions.

Baidu is China's largest search engine. Baidu prefers Chinese websites and local resources.

Baidu also offers site reviews for users - very important to gain a positive review in the search results.

Chinese websites offer a more vivid extensive product description page. Rather than just basic information, Chinese websites display promotional words about why you should buy a particular product in a convincing narrative.

CHINA - Popular social media platforms

Here's are the most popular social networks in China:

Recent

Sina Weibo

Tencent Weibo

Qzone

Tencents

Pengyou

Renren

Kaixin

Wechat

Youku Tudou

Why social commerce?

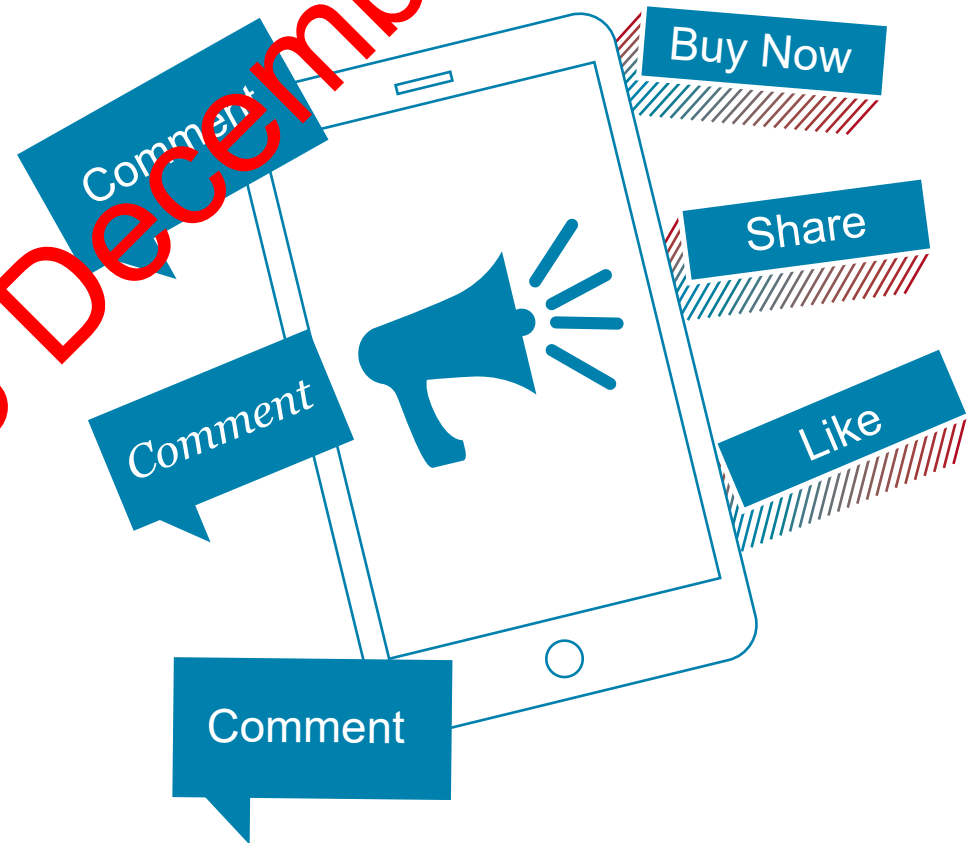
Social media drives e-commerce referrals more than any other channel

Cuts the time spent learning about your customers

Helps you to get in front of target consumers

Traditional marketing still applies! We know a recommendation from a person's social circle has a huge influence on buying decisions.

Social media networks can amplify this, for e.g. brands can promote customers tweets, give prominence to a review made on Facebook by a friend, etc. Facebook are already doing this by showing you on your feed how many of your friends connections have 'liked' or engaged with their page.



Links to further info and contacts:



“Where to now”

Find out more about how UKTI helps UK retailers and brands to accelerate their global growth via online channels at gov.uk/e-exporting and on Twitter @UKTIEcommerce.

Contacts:
e-exporting@ukti.gsi.gov.uk

Alternatively, book a meeting with one of our International Trade Advisors to discuss your online export plans: www.uktiofficefinder.ukti.gov.uk